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Dixie, Florence

Woman's position, and other objects of the...

Dundee

[1891]

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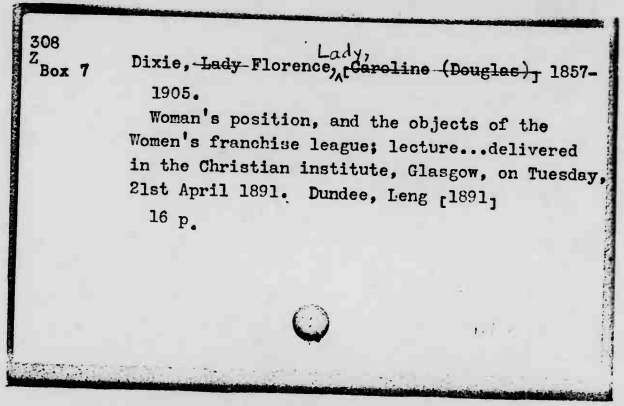

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Dixie, ~~Lady~~ Florence, [Lady, ~~Caroline (Douglas),~~] 1857-1905.

Woman's position, and the objects of the Women's franchise league; lecture...delivered in the Christian institute, Glasgow, on Tuesday, 21st April 1891. Dundee, Leng [1891]

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Woman's Position, and the Objects of the Women's Franchise League.

308 Box 7

LECTURE

BY

LADY FLORENCE DIXIE,

DELIVERED IN THE

CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE, GLASGOW,

On TUESDAY, 21st APRIL 1891.

DUNDEE:

PRINTED BY JOHN LENG & CO., BANK STREET.

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LADY FLORENCE DIXIE IN GLASGOW.

On Tuesday, April 21st, Lady Florence Dixie lectured to a large audience in the Christian Institute at Glasgow, on Woman's Position, and the objects of the Women's Franchise League. Despite the fact that Lord Aberdeen was to speak at the same time in another part of the city, the size of the audience testified not only to the popularity of the gifted lecturer, but to the interest excited in her subject. The audience, in fact, was of a distinctly high-class and intelligent character, and Lady Florence Dixie's lecture was listened to throughout with the fullest and deepest attention. Lady Florence opened her remarks by recalling briefly the aspect of the woman question during the last twenty-three years; woman's struggles for freedom, her triumphs dearly won, and only after long toil and labour, pointing out how, in all the mutilated forms of freedom accorded in the shape of voting, the married woman had been ignored and left out of the question, until at length there had actually crept into Mr Woodall's Woman's Suffrage Bill the obnoxious clause excluding the woman under coverture. Lady Florence proceeded to explain how, in spite of resolutions carried overwhelmingly at meetings of the Central National Society for Woman's Suffrage against this obnoxious clause, the Executive Committee of that Society resolved nevertheless to support the Bill, and how, in consequence, in April 1889 was started the League known as the Women's Franchise League, finally inaugurated in July of the same year and securing for Parliamentary leader Mr Haldane, M.P., Q.C.

who drafted the following Bill, which the League pledged itself to work for and support unremittingly:—

The Women's Franchise League Bill, introduced by Mr Haldane, Q.C., Sir Edward Grey, Mr Ellis, and Mr Howorth.

A BILL

To Amend the Law relating to the Political and other Disabilities of Women.

BE it enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1. In all Acts of Parliament relating to the right to vote at Parliamentary, Municipal, Local, and other elections, words importing the masculine gender shall be deemed to include women.

2. No woman shall be subject to legal incapacity from voting at such elections by reason of coverture.

3. No person shall be disqualified from being elected or appointed to, or from filling or holding, any office or position, merely by reason that such person is a woman, or, being a woman, is under coverture.

4. This act may be cited as the Women's Disabilities Removal Act, 1889.

Having briefly sketched the different phases of the movement down to the present day, and pointed out that it was not a party League, Lady Florence proceeded to discuss woman's position. The following is a summarised version of her speech from shorthand notes:—

Who has not heard that time-worn remark, "Taxation without representation is tyranny?" Well, are those words false or true? Why, the latter, of course, and therefore the position in which women of property stand now-a-days is both unfair and tyrannical, for this reason, that simply on the plea of sex they are denied the human rights of man. Now, no excluded class can be safe in regard to its rights—(applause)—and women have to thank their exclusion from political power

as the almighty reason for the disabilities and obnoxious laws which have been framed to keep them in subjection. Not only is injustice done to women by this exclusion, but manifold injustice is committed against society as a whole, for nothing but equal citizenship can produce equal and just laws, and balance the equilibrium of Government by the People. (Hear, hear.) The disqualifications and restrictions imposed on women by law and custom are degrading to them, and directly and indirectly of lasting detriment to society generally. Equal access to the opportunities of life are absolutely necessary for the sexes, one and the same code of laws governing both. (Applause.)

For years women have earnestly pleaded for the vote, yet how has that prayer been received? With the scorn and derision of men. And yet so earnest and pertinacious have been these women's efforts, that they have wrung, after toil and long deferred hope, various minor rights from an unwilling male Parliament. Let me give examples. In spite of the eloquent appeals of women in the past, the Common Law of England, drafted, mind you, by men non-representative of women, continued down to the latter half of this century to regard a married woman in the light of an imbecile. She could hold no property, make no contract, had in fact no legal existence; and the husband, no matter how brutal, had absolute power over his wife's property, and even earnings. If, to escape a life of hell with him, she obtained a separation, what was her position? Outlawry. She had absolutely no redress before the law against wrong or oppression save as the obedient and humble wife of her lord and master, which, in the separated state, was not acknowledged. What else was this but slavery, a slavery refined in its cruelty? (Loud applause.) One would have thought that such a law could be easily removed from the Statute Books. Yet what are the facts? In 1855 began the agitation for its repeal. Yet it was not until 1882 that the Married Women's Property Act was passed into law, a mere twenty-seven years. That was all! It took a male Parliament just twenty-seven years to see any wrong in the Common Law which proclaimed a married woman a nonentity and a slave. It took fifteen years of toil to such ladies as Mrs Wolstenholme Elmy and Mrs Jacob Bright to carry the Bill which in 1882 gave married women a legal status, and rights over their own property. Would this have been the case if women

had been in possession of the vote? Why, of course not. (Hear, hear.)

Yet another example. None but those who took part in it know the toil and anxiety attendant on the obtainment of the Infant's Act, another piece of beneficent legislation which women owe to the untiring and unflagging zeal of Mrs Wolstenholme Elmy. By the Common Law of England, up to the year 1886, a father was regarded as the *sole parent* of a child born in marriage, and the mother, as such, had no legal rights over her children. Nay, the father could will his children away at his death from their mother's care, and she had no legal rights to claim them. Such was the savage simplicity of England's Common Law up to the year 1886, when the Infant's Act was placed on the Statute Book. Yet in what a mutilated form to that Bill which had been introduced to Parliament, wherein absolutely equal rights were claimed for both parents over their offspring. But a male Parliament, non-representative of women, could not face such a sweeping act of justice. So they hacked the Bill about—(laughter)—retained the father's paramount rights over his children during lifetime, but allowed a sop to the mother, in the shape of a joint right to the custody of the children, with a guardian appointed by the father, after that father's death; and, futhermore, entitled the mother to appoint a co-guardian with the father over the children after her death, the Court only, however, to allow such appointment on proof that in the best interests of the children it was really necessary.

Such was the mutilated Bill by which men sought to still the natural claims of woman to a right in her children. But the principles of the Women's Franchise League declares that this sop will not satisfy womankind. (Loud applause.) The rising waves of nature cannot be driven back. They will rise and fall, and beat against the dykes of injustice, undermining their foundations, and destroying the infamous piles of unjust laws upon which they are upheld. Never will woman rest satisfied till she has won her right to be considered before the law as in every way legally the possessor of her children as is their father —(loud applause)—and if women had the vote they would exercise that vote to obtain this natural justice and destroy the law forbidding it, which is a disgrace to civilized man. (Hear, hear.)

I know it is argued by some, that of late years men have evinced a desire to do justice to women, and that, therefore, the best attitude for these latter to adopt is a sort of passive patience. We members of the Women's Franchise League deny it. We declare that every measure of so-called justice to women has only been wrung after years of toil, in mutilated forms, from that British Parliament wherein the lawyer reigns supreme, and where man sits jealously guarding the domains, privileges, and rights which he has usurped. And in thus acting, man has grossly wronged woman, and his only honest course is to frankly come forward, and having acknowledged it, give us the human right of having a voice in the making of our own laws. We need the vote for self-protection, we need it on account of our sexual difference, we need it on account of our traits and habits being different to men's, from our different ways of looking at things, from our distinct individuality, which makes it impossible that man can ever truly understand the needs of our sex, or legislate in accordance with such thorough understanding thereof which is required. By excluding a special element of nature from taking part in the conduct and framing of laws men exclude a sex, and thereby do grievous wrong to the cause of justice. (Applause.) Was it not found in America that the white man could not adequately represent the negro, and was not the negro in consequence given the right to vote; yet the distinction in this case was nothing but mere race; in woman's case it is the graver one of sex.

It is often sneeringly remarked by the wiseacres opposed to woman's participation in public affairs that she has shewn no aptitude for statemanship. But how can she when her very education denies her a right to aspire to such a position? The restrictions of a woman's upbringing have been in the past enough to make imbecile the strongest brain, to drown every ambition, hope, or energy to attain distinction, or work in those paths which men have strewn with flowers for themselves, while erecting barriers of prickly thorns against the advance of woman. (Hear.) The plain fact is, she is a prisoner, and for the present her whole energies have to be employed in seeking to obtain her freedom, which once secured, will enable her to compete with man on an even platform, and allow those energies to be shewn in superior stateswomanship, in the destruction of bad laws, in the framing of

nobler and better rules for the guidance of society. Here on this platform I declare that women are not fools. (Loud applause.) It is unjust laws and upbringing that have striven to make them so, and yet, in spite of every handicap, a woman, when she gives her mind to a subject, can grasp, master and understand it quite as quickly as a man. (Hear, hear, "So she can," and loud cheers.) It is no argument that woman is not fitted to exercise the vote, represent in Parliment, or wield the reins of power. There is no sphere in life where the joint action of the sexes is not infinitely preferable to single-handed rule; and woman can no more trust her interests to the sole charge of man, any more than he can trust his interests in the sole charge of woman. Co-partnership is the only true method of conducting business, and the co-partnership of the sexes is absolutely necessary in political as well as civil life. (Hear, hear.) Men have another argument against woman's emancipation. It is, that womankind *en masse* have not asked for it. But I answer, was it as a result of the appeal of the vast mass of slaves that slavery was abolished? Why, of course not. Who chiefly roused this country and the North against it? Why Elizabeth Heyrick, Mrs Beecher Stowe, John Brown, and Garrison, and a few other devoted advocates of the human laws of nature. It is not to the mass that you must turn your eyes in deciding this question. You must listen to the leaders of the movement—the large devoted band of intellectual women, who are giving their whole lives to the cause of emancipation, who are working patiently, hopefully, determinedly, for the just right which they claim, and which they know will only be won at the expense of years of self-sacrifice and toil on their part. (Cheers.) It is the right of intellect to general and command the rank and file, to bid the great army, that would wander hopelessly to disaster unless overlooked by leaders, to fall into the ranks, and depend on those leaders for guidance, advocacy, and direction. We women who have given our whole lives to make the future life of other women brighter, happier, and more free and justly ordered, have a right to be heard, and to be regarded as the spokeswomen of the huge toiling army, whose sufferings we know and realise. (Loud applause.)

Much of the injustice from which woman suffers has arisen in the secret belief of man in her inferiority to himself. A boy's upbringing inculcates this. He is early taught to look upon his

sister as a being whom he must protect—as something so much weaker to himself. (Laughter.) Where heredity holds sway, a lad early learns that with his father's death he takes his place, no matter that his mother is alive or he has an elder sister. They are "only women," and therefore of no account. (Laughter.) What reign can compare in the past with that of our Queen? (Applause.) Yet had Her Majesty possessed an infant idiot brother, he would have been king—she nowhere. A case in point is that of Spain. After King Alphonso's death, his daughter Doña Maria de las Mercedes became Queen. But she was only a girl, and so when later on a posthumous child was born, and it was discovered that it was of the sacred male sex—(loud laughter)—then the little Queen was hoisted down from her throne, and the ailing baby boy stuck upon it instead. (Laughter.) What sane argument have men in support of this unjust custom? None. It is not pretended that a woman cannot inherit. Lord Wolseley's only child is a girl. When he dies she will become Lady Wolseley, and be a peeress in her own right. If she has a son, he will succeed her in the peerage if his father be a commoner, and carry on the line of Wolseley to other generations; yet, should Lady Wolseley have a son, this girl loses all right of succession, solely and simply because she is a woman. Well, I plainly say that such a custom is a travesty and farce of the law of primogeniture. Primogeniture means first-born—no twisting, hacking, or mutilating can make it mean "first male born!" (Applause.)

I wonder what the early thoughts of man would be if the positions of the sexes were reversed, when he first realised the fact that secret contempt of sex was the reason for the disabilities imposed upon him by woman. I know, speaking as a woman, that when I first opened my eyes as a girl on those disabilities, and realised that my sex was the barrier that hid from my yearning gaze the bright fields of activity, usefulness, and reform, the bitterness and pain that entered into my soul can never be obliterated in my lifetime. Child as I was, I resolved to defy those unnatural laws—those false customs which proclaimed me my brother's inferior; in my girl heart I registered a vow never, save at the hands of force, to submit to them; never, while life continued, to acknowledge their justice. (Applause.)

Ladies and gentlemen, I have so far kept that vow. (Loud

applause.) I will never obey unnatural laws. I claim an equal right with man to be treated, civilly and politically, as entitled to share with him every opportunity, opening, and sphere in life. ("So you should," and applause.) I say that ministerial power, parliamentary representation, the right to vote, the privilege of adopting professions of the law in its various branches, and the monopoly of all civil and political appointments by men, have been arrogated hitherto by the male sex as solely within their sphere, and outside which women are bidden to humbly bide as pariahs. But I solemnly declare that such a state of things is not only unjust, tyrannical, and selfish; it is contrary to the laws of nature. (Applause.)

I am often met with the argument from small souls—"You women cannot be soldiers, and therefore should not claim equality with men." What rubbish! (Laughter.) I might just as well retort—"Because you men cannot become mothers, therefore you have no right to claim any kind of human privilege." (Loud laughter and applause.) This would be a far stronger plea than the other, for whereas a woman could become a soldier, a man can never become a mother. Whyte Melville declared in his writings, that "Amazons such as he had seen, rendered amenable to discipline, could conquer the world," and I can safely assert that if it came to forming smart regiments, it would be easy to obtain many a woman brigade whose members, in vigorous and physical health, would compare favourably with many of our weedy recruits. (Laughter and applause.) But that is not the question. Women have shown their capacity to fight when needed; and the fact that one sex is alone chosen to recruit our armies is no sane argument against woman's exclusion from the civil and political rights arrogated by man. Woman, on her side, performs a far greater service to humanity in her function of maternity than men do in their function of blowing other men's brains out—(laughter)—and then covering themselves with medals to proclaim their heroism. (Laughter and applause.) Where are the medals for womankind? Where the decorations, titles, honours for her services to Humanity? Why, they don't exist. Her splendid moral courage claims no reward—the mere physical courage which war is supposed to demand merits decorations and admiration *ad infinitum!* Humbug! that is, ladies and gentlemen, what I call it all; pure and

unadulterated humbug and selfishness. (Laughter, and hear, hear.)

We are mildly assured daily of our inferiority, physically and mentally, to man. I fail to see it. "We are so much stronger than you," we are told patronisingly. Perhaps in brute force, but is brute force a criterion of intelligence? (Laughter.) A woman bears pain far more heroically than man. No man can hold a watch by a sickbed like she. He may be iron, but she is steel in her capacity to bear pain, mental suffering, or wearing fatigue. Besides, woman's inferiority in physical strength to man has largely to do with her upbringing. Where a woman's mental and physical powers have been allowed, or rather forced, to remain in abeyance, however healthy her brain and body may be, they will be undeveloped. This is being every day more recognised. When I was a child, I was called a Tom-boy—(laughter)—because I indulged in physical exercise. My governesses—poor, cramped souls—held up their hands in horror when I ran races with my brother, climbed trees with him, wrestled with him, or larked my ponies bare-backed across country with him. (Laughter.) But such a life has done me no harm. I have never known a day's illness hardly in my life. I am strong, hardy, active, and able to endure any amount of physical or mental fatigue. For this reason I am yet no less a woman, a wife, and a mother. My boys do not look up to me as their inferior. All they know, mentally and physically, I have taught them; and certainly if they had had a sister, she should have shared with them in all things alike. (Applause.) It may be said that I am an exception. I will not accept that argument. I am guided by nature, that is all. Every girl who gets fair play will abundantly prove it. (Hear, hear.)

"Woman's sole function is Maternity," argue some. "Let her attend to her nursery, and leave civil and political glory and joys to men." "No," I answer, "woman is a human being, not a machine, and you must learn to look on her as as much a human being as man is." To begin with, many women do not and cannot marry. They are then, according to above argument, useless lumber. Surely a law had better be passed to exterminate them then? Again, many women, and men too, for that matter marry who should not, while many who should do not do so. Why is this? Because we are taught to regard the whole

question in such an unnatural light, and boys and girls, instead of being brought up together and taught to look on each other as human beings, are deluged with sexual notions, while the human is left out altogether. The fact is, we should leave the limitations of sex to nature, which will take care of itself, and bring up our boys and girls with the same wide field of opportunities before them, and never breathe in their ears such nonsense as the equality or inequality of the sexes, leaving them free to choose their paths in life with every knowledge of nature clearly and carefully impressed upon them; and marriage, when entered upon, should be contracted on terms of perfect equality, the offspring of every union being as much the property of one parent as the other. Because a man works for the daily bread of his wife and children, is this a reason why he should be called the sole head of the house, and his wife and children his property? No, certainly not. (Hear, hear.) The wife by her function of maternity undertakes as great a strain, nay more, on her constitution as her husband does by his toil, while she likewise contributes to her share in the labour of life by her care of the children and home duties. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, I say marriage should be a co-partnership, wherein the man and woman are the heads, the offspring their co-property; and woman never made those laws which declare her and the children to be parts of her husband's property. It is an unnatural contract—(applause)—and as such has brought misery into myriads of homes. This being so, the married woman has as much an inherent right as the married man to occupy her spare time, as he occupies his spare time, in political work, if she feels called upon by that inward feeling, that ineradicable vocation to forward the progress of humanity by the propagation of high and noble ideas, and the conduct of useful schemes which it may occur to her mind to make known, carry forth, and accomplish. The great secret of progress is, to do that to which one feels oneself moved. (Applause.) Is a woman, whose mind conceives some great idea of reform, to be so situated that she has neither power or opportunity to carry it into effect? Must she relegate her noble idea to her son, and bid him accomplish it, while she sits sewing in the nursery? Suppose she has no son; or if she has one, suppose the boy is a baby, then years must elapse before he can carry out his mother's idea, or, perchance, more

likely he will grow up to disagree with and oppose it. Fatal doctrine! Yet this is the practice and custom of our day, and as a result, thousands of lives which might have done good have sunk into the grave unknown, unknelled, unnamed, and useless for good and progress, solely because the opportunity for winning such was denied the possessors of those lives. (A woman's voice, "Shame!") Why? Was it for any crime? Yes, ladies and gentlemen, for the crime of having been born a woman.

Slavery is regarded as degrading. Slaves were disfranchised because they were degraded. We admitted them to honour and freedom when we gave them their freedom and the right to vote, to be represented and represent. Yet to women this honour and freedom is denied. Disfranchisement is still their lot, and though for years they have begged for freedom, their cry is received in cold and selfish silence by the vast majority of that sex which has self-styled itself "the superior one." ("Shame!")

Methinks, ladies and gentlemen, it thus proves its inferiority and selfish purpose by shewing its fear of the admission of womankind to the platform of freedom. And yet all men are not thus greedy of their wrongly-acquired monopoly. Aye, from the depths of my heart I say it, God bless the many noble, generous men who are fighting our battle for and with us women, standing shoulder to shoulder with us in the breach, ashamed of the selfishness of their sex, longing, eager, anxious to see us free, exultant at our each success. Yes, indeed, I say God bless them, for they, if you like, *are men*. (Loud applause.)

A word, too, is needed to arouse from their apathy those women whose lives, having been smooth, easy, and non-suffering, will not and cannot see that their sex has anything to complain of. "We are quite happy," they argue; "we have got all we want; why agitate for what we do not require?" These women have not, I fear, studied the great seething problem of struggling, suffering human nature. (Hear, hear.) They perhaps do not know, or cannot realise, the pitiable condition of millions of our working women, whose hardworked lives are little dreamt of; whose weary, miserable struggle for existence goes on day by day, in hopeless, loveless, cheerless toil. (Hear, hear.) They do not, for instance, take to heart the fact that thousands, nay, tens of thousands of these women, while doing equal work with men, are paid starvation wages, solely and simply for the crime of

being women. (Hear, hear.) Where here the boasted chivalry of men, who, saying that woman is frail and weak, yet extort from her a labour equal to that of man, while paying her a third of what the man receives? The fact is, chivalry is but a tinsel daub masking the face of selfishness. When money and gain are in the balance the mask is torn aside, exposing high and dry the demon greed. Yet how can these women aid themselves? They are voteless, and can be safely neglected. Aye, neglected by both political parties of the day, for both are equally impervious to their sufferings. (Hear, hear.) Tory, Liberal, Unionist, all are the same, as witness the composition of the Labour Commission. Not a woman appointed to sit therein. 'Tis the fault, no doubt, of the Government in power. Yes, but where are the protests of the Opposition? (Hear, hear, and applause.) There is nothing for it but to be just and fair. There should be no drawing the line anywhere. For myself I say it; for the League I represent I repeat it—I will waste no time asking for doles of freedom from man. I will go to him, as the possessor of a power which I claim to be legally and equally mine—I will tell him the truth, and appeal to his honour, his sense of justice and fair play to become converted, and abdicateh is monopoly in favour of a fair and just redistribution of power—a natural and sensible co-partnership of the sexes. For this reason, I can only frankly work for a Society like the Women's Franchise League, whose demands are clear, simple, and unmistakable—"equal civil and political rights with men for *all* women in *all* things; a fair field and no favour for both sexes; absolute equality before the law, and unprejudiced, untrammelled access to the opportunities of life." I do not pretend to predict with absolute fidelity how when women obtain their freedom they will vote, act, and rule. But I say this, nature is opposed to the rule of man alone. (Hear, hear.) Nature declares that the male and female are co-mates and inseparables. Neither sex can do without the other, neither can one sex rule alone while enforcing the degradation of the other. Again and again let me emphasize it—"Woman is not a machine." She is a human being as well as man, and as such should be so regarded and treated. And wherever woman has been given fairplay and equal chances with man, she has come to the front and distinguished herself, proving her capacity in every way, his equal, and in some cases his superior. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) It is

only a few months ago that Miss Fawcett, a mere girl of eighteen, came out first in the Mathematical Tripos four hundred marks above the senior wrangler; yet, strange anomaly, he, not she, is the senior wrangler. ("Shame.") Imagine the position reversed, she in his, he in hers, and imagine the senior wranglership having been conferred on her. How unjust and intolerable the man would have thought it. Yet that is Miss Fawcett's position exactly at this moment. In reality she is senior wrangler, but then she is a woman; so her superior in sex, but not in mathematical merit, carries off the honour. (Laughter, and hear, hear.)

A little more than twenty years ago the vast territory of Wyoming, in North America, declared that its women should not be political pariahs, and its Legislature gave them the suffrage. What moans went up, ladies and gentlemen, from that fastidious and shrieking brotherhood of women-haters, who predicted disaster dire and terrible to Wyoming in consequence. (Laughter.) Yet what are the facts? The female vote has enriched the territory, and, after twenty years of trial, that country sees no cause to regret the wise decision of its men; and yet more, a great event has come about as a result, for last June 27th this territory of Wyoming was admitted into the Union of the United States, with an article in her Constitution guaranteeing to all women of Wyoming equal political rights with their men.

Yes, to the honour of those men be it said. They were advised to leave that article out of their Constitution, and assured that if they did not, the Bill admitting them to the Union would never pass. But they stood to their guns. They declared that with their women only would they enter, and that otherwise they would remain without the Union. (Hear, hear.)

Ladies and gentlemen, they triumphed. (Loud applause.) On March 26th, 1890, the Bill passed through Congress, and on June 27th of the same year through the Senate, and now the women of Wyoming are in this position—they may fill all United States offices, they may become members of Congress and Senate, aye, and President of the United States as well. They have been recognised as human, that is all, and that is all that we women ask for ourselves. The admission of Wyoming with its women to the Union has sounded with clarion note the great overwhelming and natural fact that woman is not a slave—(cheers)—and that her equal status with man is the undying law of

Almighty Nature. (Loud cheers, during which Lady Florence Dixie resumed her seat, having spoken for fifty-five minutes.)

Various short speeches having been delivered by gentlemen, a vote of thanks was proposed to the noble lecturer for the interesting and inspiriting address she had just delivered. On rising to reply, Lady Florence Dixie was received with loud and cordial cheers. She said :—

For your warm welcome I thank you sincerely. I came here to found a branch of the Women's Franchise League, as there is not one in Scotland. I ask all those ladies and gentlemen who have cheered my words to-night to show the courage of their convictions, and to come forward and assist me in the formation of this branch, and thus help forward the good cause. It is my hope and intention, if possible, to see branches formed in every town and county of Scotland; and in Glasgow, its true capital, let us make a brave and determined start. Let us do all in our power to forward the Bill for Women's Suffrage, which is shortly coming up in Parliament for second reading; and, above all, do not let us forsake the claims of the married women. This League is not a party one, its members consisting of each and every political creed of the day—all united by one common aim. We women claim to serve our country and race in a responsible manner, and I hope that before I die I shall take my seat in Parliament as an elected representative of my native land, dear old Scotland. (Loud cheers.)

The proceedings then terminated. A branch of the League is in process of construction in Glasgow.

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